

the young men and women whom we ask to make perhaps the greatest sacrifice.

Until this past weekend, I was quite undecided as to how to respond to the President's insistence on moving against Iraq, and I took particular notice of the open-ended nature of the original draft resolution. Now, as the result of ongoing discussions with the leadership of the House and Senate, he has thought twice in seeking unilateral authority. Instead, this revised resolution allows for a preemptive use of force against Iraq and for his reporting to Congress after the fact. In short, Mr. Speaker, more questions were raised in my mind than answers given.

In the past, I have voted to support legislation designed to protect America's security. After 9-11, I was a clear and avid supporter of many pieces of legislation to support the President. Thus, I believe it is clear to all observers that I am a woman of conscience and not afraid to go on record when this Nation is faced with a clear and present danger to our way of life, our liberties, and our security.

I too believe that the world is dealing with a tyrannical dictator in Iraq and that he should not be allowed to terrorize neighboring states nor his own citizens. Saddam Hussein must and should be stopped. But how? What is the best and most appropriate way to contain him and destroy his unbridled power? Is it by having the U.S. go alone to confront this geopolitical problem that has a far-reaching impact on the entire world?

That is why this debate needs to be thorough and public, Mr. Speaker. We must look at the long-term domestic and international consequences and policy implications of intervening in Iraq. Before a declaration of war can be proclaimed, there must be an accounting of the cost both at home and abroad.

In his talk to the American people this past Monday, the President upped the ante, so to speak, and I, for one, was pleased to hear him say that war is the last resort. We must not forget that we are already fighting a war in Afghanistan and are deeply obligated to help bring security and reconstruction to that country. The costs are great, more than \$1 billion a month. Can we continue to meet such expenditures? How long will our commitments continue there? Can we afford to fight two wars? What is the exit strategy after we go into Iraq when there is none in place for Afghanistan as yet?

Mr. Speaker, many of my constituents have overwhelmingly called me to let me know they do not stand for having their sons and daughters go to war and return home in body bags until all possible diplomatic avenues have been exhausted. They want to see us, the political leaders of this great country, commit ourselves to working with the United Nations in every conceivable manner to exercise international action against a tyrant in Iraq. They

want to see us enter into a rigorous international alliance under the U.N.'s banner to force the dismantling of Iraq's massive weaponry through a comprehensive inspection system.

The American people are not fools. They know that war with Iraq inevitably will mean that their domestic priorities would suffer from a lack of attention and resources. Our unfinished business on health care, prescription drugs, welfare reform, and a faltering economy, due in large part to corporate greed and malfeasance, and the President's top tax cut, would remain on the back burner.

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I agree that Iraq has carried out regression on its own people and has not met its obligations under the U.N. resolutions.

Mr. Speaker, I will not be supporting this resolution.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to yield 40 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE), and ask that he may control that time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHUSTER). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California for yielding me the additional time. We appreciate the cooperation from the other side.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. BAIRD), a member of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

Mr. BAIRD. Mr. Speaker, the Constitution of the United States reserves to the Congress of the United States the authority to declare war. That is as it should be, for no more weighty matter confronts a nation, and it is fitting in a Republic that a decision such as this be made by the people's representatives.

Let us be clear. Saddam Hussein is a dangerous, malicious dictator. He has committed multiple atrocities, both towards his own people and others in the Middle East. He has refused to comply with U.N. resolutions or to allow weapons inspectors to fully identify and destroy his arsenal of chemical, biological and potential nuclear weapons. He has circumvented economic sanctions and has spent money from oil sales on weapons systems and personal luxuries for himself and his political cronies, rather than on the Iraqi people.

Given those facts, I believe we must increase the pressure on Iraq and insist on expanded weapons inspections with much greater resources and no restrictions. This should be done through a multinational effort coordinated through the United Nations and with the support of allies and other nations throughout the world.

The United States is absolutely right to insist on this and to take the lead in

this effort. With international support, the United States stands the greatest chance for a successful outcome; and if military intervention is necessary, the number of casualties will be reduced and the regional repercussions will be lessened.

That is why I will support the Spratt amendment authorizing the President to seek international support for expanded inspections; and if Saddam Hussein refuses to comply with such inspections and an international coalition exists, the President would be authorized to commit U.S. military resources under U.S. command.

If, however, it is not possible to achieve a multinational coalition, in those circumstances the risks, the costs, and the international implications of a unilateral attack will be far more severe. Such an attack may be necessary, but before taking that step, the President should return to the Congress, explain why agreements have not been reached. And if in his judgment force is still necessary, he should, consistent with Article I of the Constitution, seek the authorization of the Congress for military force.

Throughout the discussions of war with Iraq, I have asked fundamental questions: What threat is posed by Iraq now and in the future? What is the military strategy for reducing that threat? What will the cost of that strategy be in human casualties on all sides? What are the international implications and potential regional scenarios that might be developed, and what is our long term strategy for the region?

I believe the first question has been answered. It is apparent that, while the threat to our own Nation may not be imminent, if allowed to go on Saddam Hussein will eventually develop even more dangerous weapons. Beyond that, however, the remaining questions have not been fully addressed. For each of the issues I have raised, and many others have as well, the potential risks and costs would be dramatically greater if the U.S. acts unilaterally rather than in a multinational effort.

Even some of our strongest allies have indicated they would not support us militarily or financially if we go it alone. Yet the risks, costs and consequences of unilateral action have not been adequately explained to the American people. Whatever course is chosen, I believe we will not solve the problem of international terrorism or weapons of mass destruction solely by attacking Saddam Hussein or solely through the broad use of military force. I understand well the impulse and the desire to do something and do it now to reduce the threat and fear created by September 11, and I believe it may yet be necessary to disarm Saddam Hussein, but we must all recognize that there is no course of action without risk or that we will eliminate all risk in the future.

Ultimately, we must look at the source of international conflicts; and